4: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1943
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and planting, which begins after the first light rains of October, is done individually and principally by the men. Cotton and peanuts, however, are women's crops. The women plant these in their husband's garden plots and harvest them themselves. While a new garden plot is cleared each year, a particular garden plot is generally used for two years and then abandoned. A man plants such crops as maize, beans, and peppers on the plot the first year and as they are harvested, he replants the plot with manioc. Maize is harvested from the end of December through February, the season of heaviest rains; while other crops are harvested at the end of the rains in May and June.

Large gardens with many different crops guarantee to the Tapirapé a variety and abundance of garden stuff, but meat and fish are definitely luxuries. People in the village could not remember a time when there had been real hunger among them, but they were frequently hungry for meat and fish. This lack in the diet is supplied by frequent trips to the near-by Tapirapé River and the grass plains that border it where fish and game, principally wild pork (*Tagassu pecari*), deer, peccary (*Tagassu tajacu*), water fowl, and tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*) are found in abundance. During the dry season these plains abound in piqui (*Caryocar villosum*), palm nuts especially andiroba (*Carapa guyanensis*), used for body oil — and other wild fruits.

Among the Tapirapé wealth is not reckoned in terms of basic subsistence, for these goods are so easy to obtain as to be considered with little regard. The possessions that lend real distinction of wealth are such luxury articles as the breast and tail feathers of the red parrot (*Ara chloroptera?*), beads, and pieces of hardware acquired through contact with white men or trading with other Indians. These goods are accordingly the most valued media of exchange in the community. Other goods used for a medium of exchange were urucú (*Bixa orellana*), tobacco, extra hammocks, decorated gourds, string for binding feathers to arrows, and cane arrow shafts.

The houses of a Tapirapé village form a circle around a great central ceremonial men's house. There are nine of these large thatch dwellings with rounded roofs in the modern Tapirapé village: four to eight simple families (father, mother, and children) share a house. Each simple family has a section of the unpartitioned house where they lead a domestic life separate from the others. Residence is matrilocal and the women of such a household are ideally related by kinship; yet each large household has

101 [16] The Tapirapé Indians live in central Brazil north of the Tapirapé River, a left tributary of the Araguaia located in the extreme south of the state of Pará. They speak a dialect of Tupi-Guarani, the most widespread aboriginal tongue in Brazil. In spite of a great decline in their population, they still posses a rich cultural tradition which is peculiar to them and which distinguishes them [173] from other tribes. Their customs and traditions are transmitted orally with great care from generation to generation. One of the most 861 interesting among them is the ceremony in which the youth assumes the status of a grown man. This change in status is marked by nearly all peoples. Among us, when a young man reaches the age of 21, he can vote, marry, sign documents, etc.; among many primitive groups, the youth proves that he has become an adult by undergoing torture or achieving success in the hunt.

Among the Tapirapé, this tradition is observed with a festival [302] of song and dance called "hair-tying," for henceforth the young man will wear his hair tied at the back of the neck in adult fashion. For 858 several years before the ceremony, the boy keeps his body painted [302] black with genipap, wears his hair cropped close to the head--"like a monkey," in the words of the Tapirapé-- is subjected to food restrictions, and has his arms and legs scarified until they bleed so he [304] will "grow strong." When he reaches 14 or 15 years of age, his [854] family decides that the time has come for him to become an adult.

88 At the close of the rainy season, the time of harvesting and [221] thus of plenty for the tribe, the "hair-tying" ceremony is carried out. For months beforehand, the youth allows his hair to grow until it comes [302] down to his shoulders. Meanwhile, mother and aunts weave threads [462] (cords) to adorn him, while father and uncles collect feathers with [283] which they make elaborate ornaments. All Tapirapé youths become [297] adults through this rite; the sons of important men, however, and [554] those who were "favorite sons" (the Tapirapé elect certain children to preferential treatment) are much more richly attired than the others. The ceremony is costly to the family, and much time is needed beforehand to gather the necessary materials--macaw tail feathers, short [237] feathers of the blue macaw and parrot, breast fluff of wild ducks, cotton threads for the ornaments, and beads. All these items are [556] [435] valuable to the Tapirapé, who gauge their own wealth in these terms.